6 March 64

(Valerie in Welsh
Radio Times)

About to leave
Northwick Ldge

*Stanley H. - helping

PS. Have not read this through, so
forgive any lacunae & strange &
unintelligibilities – chap waiting
to post it, as I'm not going out
with this cold. J.

Northwick Lodge.
Harrow on the Hill
Fri. March 6th 1964

My Dearest René

I'm terribly sorry for failing to
answer at least two letters &
now the Cennin Pedr, Peter's leeks,
(daffodils) came a day or so ago – it
was kind of you to think of sending them.
Yes, the news you heard from Tom is
true indeed, this house is being vacated
& you can imagine the chaos of
trying to sort out pack up etc the
14 years of accumulation in this room.
It all happened with some suddenness,
but no one could help it – only it
was an awful blow because I had
dismissed from my mind the notion of having
to move which had been so worrying a year
or so back as all seemed to be settling
down nicely. Anyway, there it is. This can't
be more than a note for I'm preoccupied
with trying to cope & nothing is settled.
However it is arranged that all the
pictures go to a bank for safety &
perhaps all my other stuff to store
or maybe I shall go to a
sort of 'Residential Hotel'* down the
road for the time being – but it's too
boring to go into all the details &
this is only to thank you for your
letters & the daffodils. I'll write
again when I know where I am.
I had hoped there might be
somewhere on this hill, but there is
nothing, all sorts of people have been
terribly kind. One person in particular

Poor old C.C.
got a lot worse
& has to be
sent into an
institution. Poor
old man – he's
been so kind to me
these past years
it's awful this
senile decay thing.
Makes you think
of the classical
saying 'Those whom
the gods love etc.'

*There is a room about
as big as this there
but a friend of mine
found & the stuff was
going to be moved there,
& still may be, but
there's some hitch in
the arrangement – you
know – there always
is! We'll see.

whom Jon Dark knew, a young man who used to live here during my first years here, now married & living in Old Ch St Chelsea has taken crate-loads of unsorted papers etc for the time being to a store-room in his house & has also arranged for the bank to take the pictures & all sorts of other things. He's a Quantity Surveyor by profession & knows all the ins & outs of how to do these things. I have bought a certain amount of furniture for the house, things I wanted, for not all the things in this room belonged to me. & I shall need various things in any new room. But it's so appallingly difficult not to get the things one immediately needs packed up with things one does not immediately need. To add to the difficulties I've had an awful cold, which I've not had for years owing to the effectiveness of injections, & also the weather is appallingly cold & the house outside this room like an ice-box. Well, it's useless cracking on, I'll write properly when I'm somewhere & less distracted. I shall miss this room terribly for it absolutely suits me to perfection, but there it is. It's rather as when old Jerry suddenly broke through & the whole front system was aufgerollt & Corps H.Q. staff-wallahs were caught in their pyjamas. & the Siege Artillery ~~was~~ impedimenta was hopelessly mixed up with that of the Infantry. To leave all that aside, I've had a quite surprising reception in the U.S. — or from certain Catholic quarters mainly — of The Anathemata e.g. 'Candlemas Lecture' at Boston on The Anathemata by Fr William T. Noon of the Society of Jesus, professor of Eng. Lit. at Loyola Seminary, Shrub Oak, N.Y. — that sort of thing. It would appear that there are among Americans chaps who are far more receptive, willing to worry-out the meaning of a thing, more generous, naive - yes, perhaps, but ~~more~~ more open, yes, more perceptive, ~~[illegible]~~ not so inhibited and unresponsive as, the English – in spite of the American 'thing' being so awful, this does seem – at least that has been my experience over these few works of mine — to be true.

I'm terribly sorry about dear Rosalind and that nuns' school at Waterford. I can just see it – absolutely. And children are always so cruel to another child from elsewhere – the slightest difference they always pick on to mock. For example the other day Douglas C. came to see me about the Ancient Mariner thing & he told me how his little boy had joined some – I don't know what it was – perhaps Boy Scout Wolf-Cubs, or God knows what, in Islington, but he had to leave because the other little boys tormented him for his different, or more 'posh' accent. It's an awful problem a snobism inverted.

Sorry to hear you are not sleeping too well – hope that's better. The Boat sounds a nice idea. Forgive any more now, dear René, this is just an interim situation report. As soon as I know more what I'm doing I'll let you know. God bless you & much love to Joan & Rosalind.

Look after yourself

much love Dai.

P.S. strange thing, I was tearing-up masses of stuff & my eye caught a glimpse in a Feb. issue of the Radio Times ('Welsh Home Service' edition) ~~of~~ of a girl's face & I thought Lord! that's quite like darling Valerie – suppose it's a South-Welsh type – & then I drew out the paper & it jolly well was Valerie in ~~[illegible]~~ a Welsh-language Television play, looking a bit different because of Television make up of course. Then I did my best to read what it said and ~~it~~ after a bit about the play it said ~~[illegible]~~

P.T.O.

④

Merch amryddawn yw Valerie Price sy'n chwarae rhan Tessa — Girl versatile is V.P. who plays the part of Tessa. Magwyd hi yng Nghwmllynfell ac ymhlith pethau eraill bu'n ffsiotherapydd, athrawes, model a phencampreg ~~hydlo~~ hyrdlo Cymru. Nurtured (was) she in Cwmllynfell & and among many things has been physiotherapist, a (school) teacher, a model and champion hurdler of Wales. Well, it's the last bit that amuses me — I had never heard of her prowess as a 'hurdler' — indeed I did not know chaps jumped hurdles — I mean as a specific sport — very puzzling. I knew about the other occupations — ffsiotherapydd is jolly nice isn't it for physiotherapist.

Well, well.

Dai

* you would think it could be written y'Nghwmllynfell. but it never is.

Lord, it's a difficult language at my age, and stupidity — I make practically no progress in it. How are you getting on with what the Welsh ~~call~~ call Hên Gwyddeleg, Old Irish?

D

Had a job to translate ymhlith because plith means 'midst' as a substantive: & ymhlith pethau eraill means 'among things many' & you have to put ym before plith when used as a preposition & that mutates plith & introduces an aspirate and is then written as one word ymhlith — it's a bugger isn't it. I knew pethau meant 'things' & that eraill meant 'many' but it took me about two hours to find out what ymhlith meant because I did not recognize the hidden plith; midst, middle, among. You see the same thing happens with the preposition 'in' in 'Cwmllynfell' yn = in but becomes yng before an initial C & then the C goes & an aspirate takes its place, so it becomes yng* Nghwmllynfell. Does this mutation business operate in Irish? I know it does in some way but I don't know if it is much the same way as Welsh.

the duplication of ng is odd because of course it is not sounded — you just say (phonetically) ung-hoom-llin-vell but at all events in modern orthography the repeat is always used — I used to know why, but have forgotten.

* of course the y has to be preserved.